

Claims 1-56. (Cancelled)

57. (Currently Amended) A method for creating an automated bidding process among energy Providers for the benefit of end users in which a moderating computer collects bids from each Provider of a plurality of energy Providers, processes the bids and designates at least one Provider of the plurality of energy Providers to provide energy, consisting of electric power or natural gas, to at least one end user, based on an economic choice in accordance with auction rules, wherein the method comprises:

- a. in the moderating computer, receiving bids to provide energy to the at least one end user, processing the bids in accordance with the auction rules to produce processed bid data, and storing the bids and the processed bid data in a data base of the moderating computer as first end-user set data;
- b. in the moderating computer, transmitting at least a portion of the first end-user set data to at least a portion of the plurality of energy Providers;
- c. in the moderating computer, designating at least one Provider of the plurality of energy Providers to provide energy to the at least one end user, with each designated Provider to supply at least a portion of the energy to be used by the at least one end user at at least one end-user facility during at least a portion of a specific future time interval; and
- d. in the moderating computer, or in a first DISCO serving the at least one end user, or in an independent meter reading service entity, transmitting

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periodic usage reports associated with the at least one end user to at least a first designated Provider.

58. (Previously Added) A method of Claim 57 in which the moderating computer designates at least two Providers of the plurality of energy Providers to provide energy to the at least one end user, with each designated Provider to supply at least a portion of the energy to be used by the at least one end user at at least one end-user facility during the specific future time interval.

59. (Previously Added) A method of Claim 57 in which the designated Providers, when their respective commitments are summed, are committed to supply 100% of the energy needed by the at least one end user.

60. (Previously Added) A method of Claim 57 in which the auction rules include bid formulation requirements specifying the required elements that must be reflected in the bid for the moderating computer to consider the bid valid.

Claim 61. (Cancelled)

62. (Previously Added) A method of Claim 60 in which the bid formulation requirements specify that all bids indicate the quantity of energy each Provider will provide, at a specific

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price, to the at least one end user.

63. (Previously Added) A method of Claim 57 in which the moderating computer transmits historical energy usage data associated with the at least one end user to at least a portion of the plurality of energy Providers.

Claim 64. (Cancelled)

65. (Previously Added) A method of Claim 57 in which at least one adjunct computer performs at least a portion of the processing and communications functions of the moderating computer.

Claims 66-186. (Cancelled)